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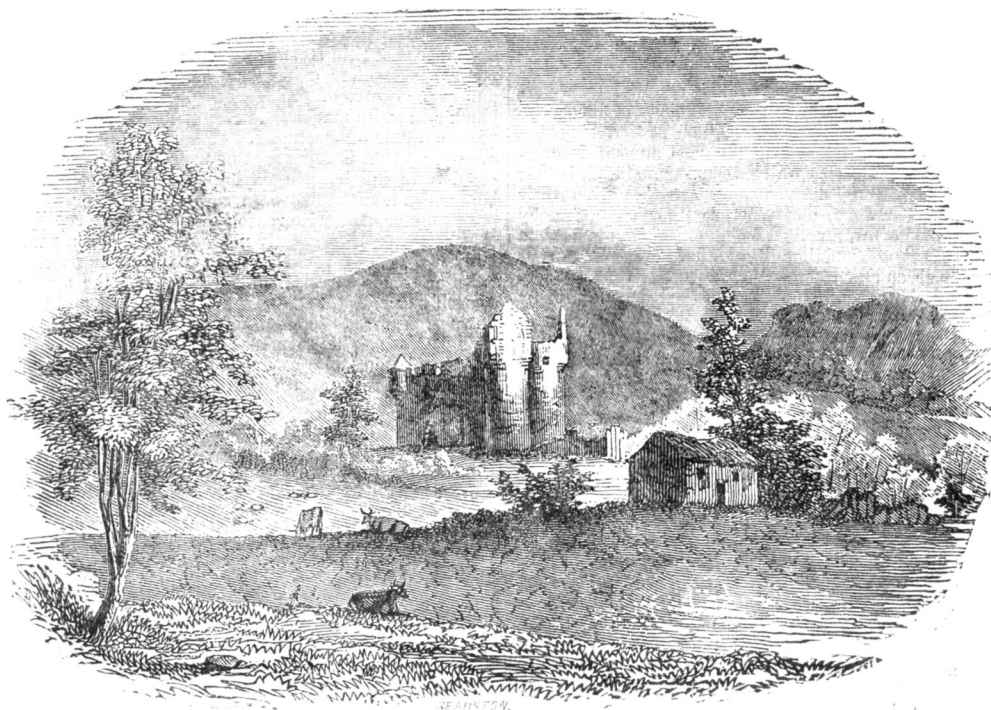
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# THE IRISH PENNY JOURNAL.

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VOLUME I.



## THE CASTLE OF MONEA, COUNTY OF FERMANAGH.

THE Castle of Monea, or Castletown-Monea—properly *Magh an fhiuidh*, i.e. the plain of the deer—is situated in the parish of Devinish, county of Fermanagh, and about five miles north-west of Enniskillen. Like the Castle of Tully, in the same county, of which we gave a view in a recent number, this castle affords a good example of the class of castellated residences erected on the great plantation of Ulster by the British and Scottish undertakers, in obedience to the fourth article concerning the English and Scottish undertakers, who “are to plant their portions with English and inland-Scottish tenants,” which was imposed upon them by “the orders and conditions to be observed by the undertakers upon the distribution and plantation of the escheated lands in Ulster,” in 1608. By this article it was provided that “every undertaker of the *greatest proportion* of two thousand acres shall, within two years after the date of his letters patent, build thereupon a castle, with a strong court or bawn about it; and every undertaker of the second or *middle proportion* of fifteen hundred acres shall within the same time build a stone or brick house thereupon, with a strong court or bawn about it. And every undertaker of the *least proportion* of one thousand acres shall within the same time make thereupon a strong court or bawn at least; and all the said undertakers shall cause their tenants to build houses for themselves and their families, near the principal castle, house, or bawn, for their mutual defence or strength,” &c.

Such was the origin of most of the castles and villages now existing in the six escheated counties of Ulster—historical memorials of a vast political movement—and among the rest this of Monea, which was the castle of the *middle proportion* of Dirrinefogher, of which Sir Robert Hamilton was the first patentee.

From Pynnar's Survey of Ulster, made in 1618-19, it appears that this proportion had at that time passed into the possession of Malcolm Hamilton (who was afterwards archbishop of Cashel), by whom the castle was erected, though the bawn, as prescribed by the conditions, was not added till some years later. He says,

“Upon this proportion there is a strong castle of lime and stone, being fifty-four feet long and twenty feet broad, but hath no bawn unto it, nor any other defence for the succouring or relieving of his tenants.”

From an inquisition taken at Monea in 1630, we find, however, that this want was soon after supplied, and that the castle, which was fifty feet in height, was surrounded by a wall nine feet in height and three hundred in circuit.

The Malcolm Hamilton noticed by Pynnar as possessor of “the middle proportion of Dirrinefogher,” subsequently held the rectory of Devinish, which he retained in *commendam* with his archbishopric till his death in 1629. The proportion of Dirrinefogher, however, with its castle, was escheated to the crown in 1630; and shortly after, the old chapel of Monea was converted into a parish church, the original church being inconveniently situated on an island of Lough Erne.

Monea Castle served as a chief place of refuge to the English and Scottish settlers of the vicinity during the rebellion of 1641, and, like the Castle of Tully, it has its tales of horror recorded in story; but we shall not uselessly drag them to light. The village of Monea is an inconsiderable one, but there are several gentlemen's seats in its neighbourhood, and the scenery around it is of great richness and beauty.